



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

is sufficient to justify the Association in embarking on a new scheme for permanent additions to its publications; and your Committee is of the opinion that no such series should be started unless it could be maintained permanently.

On the whole, your committee reports that its conclusion is that it is inexpedient for the Association to take any action for a new series. The enlargement of the Review evidently met with favor among the persons addressed, and the maintenance of the Review at its present high standard seems unquestionably desirable. Should it appear that after all needed appropriation for the Review a considerable surplus should remain in hand during the next few years, the extension of the Association's publishing activities may be considered.

F. W. TAUSSIG,
M. B. HAMMOND,
H. J. DAVENPORT.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON METHODS OF ARRANGING PROGRAMS FOR THE ANNUAL MEETINGS

At the Washington meeting, December, 1915, your committee was appointed to consider whether the present method of arranging the programs of the annual meetings might wisely be modified. The committee corresponded with the former presidents of the Association and with some eight or ten other members concerning the proper scope and method of its work. On the basis of the suggestions received, a "first formulation of some points at issue" was drawn up in the form of a questionnaire and submitted to some eighty members of the Association, including former presidents, with a request for further counsel and criticism. The questionnaire finally sent out is in scope and in detail the result of this interchange of opinion and may be regarded as an honest attempt to ascertain the wishes of the membership.

It was decided, on grounds of economy, not to send the questionnaire to the entire membership of the Association. The Secretary of the Association gave the committee the names of those who had registered at the last two annual meetings and added to this list the names of a few other persons likely to be interested. In June, 1916, the questionnaire was mailed to 505 persons. By August 160 had replied. Duplicates were sent to the 345 who had not replied and 85 responded. The committee thus secured replies from 245 persons, 15 of whom returned the questionnaire with no answers made. The

resume of answers is accordingly based on the 230 questionnaires which were answered in full or in part by December 5, 1916.

This resumé has been mimeographed and distributed so that detailed comment by your committee is unnecessary. If the replies to the questionnaire fairly represent the attitude of our membership, dissatisfaction with our present program methods is not serious. Perhaps it is not serious because it is the general feeling among the members that the chief purposes of the annual meetings are opportunities for personal contact and interchange of ideas. Nevertheless there is sufficient dissatisfaction to justify our future program makers in giving the matter serious consideration. By way of constructive suggestions, the replies indicate marked preferences (1) for some sectional meetings, (2) for announcing some topics early in the year with a general invitation to contribute, (3) for giving more time to discussion with a large number participating in such discussion, (4) for reasonably rigid adherence to time limits for both leading papers and discussions, and (5) for advance publication of leading papers.

A member of the committee made a study of the methods of several other associations. The desirable elements which he found in the methods of these associations are: (1) preprinting of papers; (2) limited time given to the authors of the papers, with a maximum time for general discussion; (3) sectional meetings, for a substantial part of the time; (4) control of programs in the hands of permanent committees; (5) combination of volunteer and solicited papers; (6) adequate opportunity for the author to reply, in print, to his critics. It will be noted that with the exception of (4) and (6), which issues were not definitely raised in the questionnaire, this finding is in substantial agreement with the outstanding preferences voiced in the answers to the questionnaire.

Your committee therefore finds as follows:

1. On the basis of the replies to the questionnaire and the investigation of the methods in use in other associations, we regard an improvement of our program methods practicable.

2. We recommend that this report and the resumé of the answers to the questionnaire be made accessible in permanent form, in such manner as seems wise to the Executive Committee of the Association, in order that (a) the data may be of service to future program makers; and that (b) the membership of the Association may have an opportunity to study the data and to take further action at a future meeting if it so desires.

The committee asks the privilege of substituting these recommenda-

tions, prior to their publication, to the absent member of the committee in order to give him an opportunity to concur in them or to dissent from them.

Respectfully submitted.

E. A. GOLDENWEISER,

L. C. MARSHALL, *Chairman*.

[The foregoing report was presented to and accepted by the Association. The absent member of the committee has subsequently submitted the following supplementary reports, with which Mr. Goldenweiser concurs.]

As the results of the questionnaire were tabulated too late for the committee to work out a report through correspondence, the two members of the committee who were present at the Columbus meeting have saved my rights to file a supplementary report—a courtesy for which I wish to express my thanks.

I would express general concurrence with the statements of the report presented at the meeting, with qualified dissent at one or two points. I wish to add certain information based on the investigation of the work of other associations, which was the task especially assigned me, and to make rather more specific recommendations than the main report contains.

A study of the questionnaire, together with verbal expressions from many members, leads me to feel that the degree of discontent with previous programs is rather greater than the main report would hold. Perhaps a better statement would be that the membership is more interested in *improving* the program than the report would indicate. Members expressing great discontent are not numerous (15). The number "somewhat dissatisfied" is large (64). The number "pleased but somewhat dissatisfied" is 8. Eighty-seven thus express some degree of dissatisfaction. Twenty-one express themselves as "very well pleased," and 79 as "pleased," a total of 110. This would indicate a preponderance of those who do not desire to make negative criticism, or to *find fault* with previous policies. It indicates an extensive dissatisfaction, none the less. When, however, the question of constructive changes is raised, a much higher percentage makes clear a desire for change. This is particularly evident on two points: (1) when the question of a general invitation to the membership to volunteer papers on announced topics is raised, and (2) when the question of having sectional meetings is raised. In favor of a general invitation to volunteer papers there were 134 votes giving unqualified approval; 21 votes giving qualified approval; one vote, "not always"; only 25 members opposed the plan. In favor of some sectional meetings there were 171 votes, and there were only 33 votes in favor of having all meetings general meetings. Of those who replied to the further question as to the proportion of time to be given to sectional meetings, the great majority desired to give one third or more of the time to sectional meetings. The proportion that meet the wishes of the largest number is one half.

The writer feels that the membership does not, as a whole, wish to take any stand that would indicate disapproval of what has been done. The programs have been good, and the men who have been responsible for them have done praiseworthy and unselfish work. But the membership does feel that improvement is possible and desirable.

The study of the work of other associations suggests some significant points. The associations investigated were: the American Historical Association; the Modern Language Association; the American Society of Civil Engineers; the American Mathematical Society; the American Society of Mechanical Engineers. In *none* of these organizations is the work of making the program left to the president. The American Society of Civil Engineers seems to

meet primarily for social purposes, and its work is not of particular interest for our purposes. From each of the others, however, it is possible to draw points of interest. I shall give chief attention to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, whose methods seem to have most that we could advantageously borrow.

First, as stated, in none of these organizations does the annually changing president make the program. The matter is left with permanent officers or permanent committees. The gain that comes from this is decided. There is continuity of purpose; there is an accumulation of experience and knowledge of the membership; it is possible to get plans under way early. A former president of the American Economic Association stated to a member of the committee that preprinting of the papers, of which he was in favor, is virtually impossible under our present system, as the newly elected president cannot get things under way in time. Obviously, each new president must go over the whole ground afresh, must do work that has been done many times before, and in no case can he make plans for more than one year. There is no particular reason why he should be personally very well informed as to the researches which members of the Association have under way. There is a strong temptation—to which many of our presidents have not yielded—for the president to assign positions on the program only to the conspicuous men, with whose work he is acquainted, and of whose creditable performance he can be sure. A permanent committee, accumulating year by year fuller knowledge of the membership, and the work which individuals are doing, could much more safely call on less known men to make contributions.

A model for this seems to be found in the methods of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, for information regarding which I am indebted to Professor L. S. Marks, of Harvard University. This society has a permanent program committee. There are also permanent sectional committees, appointed by the general committee. The sectional committees have control of the sectional programs. In the opinion of Professor Marks, the system works admirably.

In this association, papers are always printed in advance. The advance printing includes both the full paper and an abstract. The full papers are sent only to such members as ask for them. The papers appear later in the published proceedings, together with the discussions. The discussion of the papers is conducted under a strict time limit. The author states his theses in five or ten minutes. Then written discussions follow, after which a general discussion takes place. The author then may take five minutes for rebuttal. The author is allowed to expand his rebuttal in the published proceedings.

In this association, also, the system of volunteering papers is practiced. Papers are solicited from certain members, but all members are invited to volunteer. Papers may be volunteered on any topic in which a member is interested. The method of volunteering papers is as follows: A member writes a brief letter, stating the subject he would like to present, and his main theses; the committee involved passes upon this, and selects the most promising or most suitable volunteers; the members are then asked to prepare their papers, which the committee still reserves the right to reject. This is not, in practice, burdensome to the committees, although the membership numbers 6000, of whom from 1200 to 2000 attend the annual meeting in New York. It would be burdensome for a single officer. One association, whose secretary controls the program, and in which finished papers are volunteered, has developed informally a committee of men called on by the secretary, who relieve him of what would otherwise be an impossible burden.

It seems eminently desirable that the American Economic Association should make some provision for volunteered contributions. It is the clear desire of the membership that this be done, as shown above. The questionnaire raised only the question of a general invitation to contribute papers on topics announced by the program-making authority; the writer would urge that topics suggested by the volunteers should also be considered. There is a special reason why the authority to regulate this should be in the hands of committees rather

than a single officer: the matter would then be handled more impersonally, and disappointed volunteers would be less likely to feel personally aggrieved.

With reference to the proposed sectional meetings, it seems important to emphasize one point. In the questionnaire (question 7), "sectional meeting" and "round-table meeting" are made identical. This need not be the case. A sectional meeting at which most of the time is taken up in the reading of papers is not a "round-table" meeting. For a round-table meeting, it is essential that the main speakers should be brief, and that discussion should be general. This can be accomplished by the preprinting of papers, after which a brief summary of theses by the main speaker is sufficient. A strong preference for this is indicated by the vote. Another method (which might be especially suitable for the round-table on theory) would be to make an article or a chapter (or chapters) in a book recently published the basis of the discussion. This plan also met substantial approval in the replies to the questionnaire. It was proposed for the round-table on theory at the 1914 meeting by a group of over thirty men, including an ex-president of the Association, and was subsequently endorsed by a number of others, including two or three ex-presidents. At such meetings, the author of the main paper, or the book or article under discussion, should, of course, have opportunity to conclude the discussion, and should participate in it.

The following amendment to the Constitution of the American Economic Association is proposed for consideration by the Executive Committee and the members at the next annual meeting of the Association:

The program shall be arranged by a committee of five, consisting of the President, the Secretary, and three members elected at the annual business meetings on nominations from the floor. Of the three elected members chosen in the first year, one shall serve one year, one two years, and one three years, and thereafter elections, one each year, shall be for a term of three years. The number of years which each of the first three members shall serve shall be determined by lot after their election. The program committee shall organize a number of sections, corresponding to the major special interests of the membership, and shall appoint committees, with a permanent or slowly changing membership, which shall have charge of the programs for the sectional meetings. For the first two years after the adoption of this amendment, not less than one-third of the sessions of the annual meetings shall be given to sectional meetings. Thereafter, the general program committee shall have power to reduce this proportion if it deems it desirable to do so in the light of experience. The general program committee shall have power to create new sections and to abolish old ones; to reconstitute sectional committees; and to veto the plans of any sectional committee. The President shall have power to veto any item in any program proposed by any committee.

B. M. ANDERSON, JR.

Publications of the American Economic Association

- | | |
|--|------|
| The National Monetary Commission; Capitalization of Public Service Corporations in Massachusetts. Pp. 432. | 1.50 |
| 2. Hand-Book of the Association, 1909. Pp. 59. | .25 |
| 3. The Printers. By George E. Barnett. Pp. 379. (<i>In cloth \$2.00.</i>) | 1.50 |
| 4. Life Insurance Reform in New York. By W. H. Price. Pp. 95. | .75 |

Volume XI, 1910

- | | |
|---|------|
| 1. Twenty-second Annual Meeting: Papers and Discussions on History of the Association; Observation in Economics; Economic Dynamics; Theory of Wages; Country Life; Valuation of Public Service Corporations; Trusts; Taxation. Pp. 386. | 1.50 |
| 2. Hand-Book of the Association, 1910. Pp. 79. | .25 |
| 3. The Child Labor Policy of New Jersey. By A. S. Field. Pp. 229. | 1.25 |
| 4. The American Silk Industry and The Tariff. By F. R. Mason. Pp. 178. | 1.00 |

The publications, 1886-1910, viz., First Series, New Series, Economic Studies, and Third Series, twenty-eight volumes, in cloth, \$94.00. Special price to libraries on application. The supply of complete sets is now below twenty.

THE ECONOMIC BULLETIN

Published quarterly in 1908, 1909, and 1910, and containing personal notes, news of the economic world, announcements of special lines of investigation, and a classified and annotated bibliography of the current books and articles on economic subjects.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------|
| Volume I, 1908. Four numbers. | \$2.00; each .60 |
| Volume II, 1909. Four numbers. | \$2.00; each .60 |
| Volume III, 1910. Four numbers. | \$2.00; each .60 |

FOURTH SERIES.

Subscriptions by non-members, libraries, etc., \$5.00 a year.

Volume I, 1911

- | | |
|--|------------|
| The American Economic Review, March, June, September, and December; | each, 1.00 |
| Twenty-third Annual Meeting: Papers and Discussions on The Significance of a Comprehensive System of Education; Money and Prices; The Ricardo Centenary; Accounting; Canals and Railways; Population and Immigration; Labor Legislation; Taxation; A Definition of Socialism; Competition in the Fur Trade. Pp. 388. | 1.50 |
| Handbook of the Association, 1911, Pp. 69. (<i>Out of Print.</i>) | |

Volume II, 1912

- | | |
|---|------------|
| The American Economic Review, March, June, September, and December; | each, 1.00 |
| Supplement.—Twenty-fourth Annual Meeting: | |
| Papers and Proceedings. The Economic Utilization of History; Tariff Legislation; The Federal Budget; Rural Conditions; Selection of Population by Migration; The Price Concept; An International Commission on the Cost of Living; Industrial Efficiency. | 1.25 |

Volume III, 1913

- | | |
|---|------------|
| The American Economic Review, March, June, September, and December; | each, 1.25 |
| Supplement.—Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting: | |
| Papers and Proceedings. Population or Prosperity; The Rising Cost of Living—Standardizing the Dollar; Banking Reform; | |

Publications of the American Economic Association

- Theories of Distribution; Farm Management; Governmental Price Regulation. Pp. 155. 1.25
Supplement—Handbook of the Association, 1913. Pp. 61. .50

Volume IV, 1914

- The American Economic Review, March, June, September, and December; each, 1.25
Supplement.—Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting:
Papers and Proceedings. The Increasing Governmental Control of Economic Life; The Control of Public Utilities; Railroad Rate Making; Syndicalism; Trust Decisions and Business. Pp. 211. 1.25
Supplement.—Handbook of the Association, 1914. .75

Volume V, 1915

- The American Economic Review, March, June, September, and December; each, 1.25
Supplement.—Twenty-seventh Annual Meeting:
Papers and Proceedings. Economics and the Law; Regulation of the Stock Exchanges; Market Distribution; Statistical Work of the United States Government; Relation of Education to Industrial Efficiency; The Effect of Income and Inheritance Taxes on the Distribution of Wealth; Public Regulation of Wages. 1.25

Volume VI, 1916

- The American Economic Review, March, June, September, and December; each, 1.25
Supplement.—Twenty-eighth Annual Meeting:
Papers and Proceedings. The Apportionment of Representatives; Effect of the War on Foreign Trade; Budget Making and the Increased Cost of Government; Economic Costs of War; Economic Theorizing and Scientific Progress; The Role of Money in Economic Theory; Price Maintenance; Investment of Foreign Capital. Pp. 248. 1.25
Supplement.—Handbook of the Association, 1916. .75

Volume VII, 1917

- The American Economic Review, March, June, September, and December; each, 1.25
Supplement.—Twenty-ninth Annual Meeting:
Papers and Proceedings. The National Point of View in Economics; Landed Property; Two Dimensions of Economic Productivity; Some Social Surveys in Iowa; The Land Problem and Rural Welfare; The Federal Farm Loan Act; Statistics of the Concentration of Wealth; Gold Supply at the Close of the War; Loans and Taxes in War Finance; Problems of Population after the War; Some Phases of the Minimum Wage. Pp. 275.

The American Economic Association, founded, among other purposes, for "the encouragement of economic research," and "the encouragement of perfect freedom of economic discussion," has about 2500 members, including public and professional men and most of the leading students of political economy in America. Membership dues are five dollars a year. Each member receives all current reports and publications of the Association.

*Address all orders for publications, applications for membership,
and inquiries to the*

SECRETARY OF THE AMERICAN ECONOMIC ASSOCIATION
Ithaca, N. Y.